

Audio Sermons: <https://itunes.apple.com/us/podcast/caboose-ministries/audiopodcast/id506049887mt=2>

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"TEL HAI CAMP & TRANQUILITY BASE"



Dear *Friends & Family*,

[8/8] A week ago tomorrow it will have been a week since I returned from an **8-day, 557-mile** ministry trip to the Reading, PA area. After 4 months of "quarantined/video production" ministry our Lord heard the prayers He ignited my heart to pray re: opening up doors of ministry despite **Covid-19**. As I wrote in July's newsletter, if there is a time ministry is "essential" to teenagers & children, it's during the idle summer season. The two ministry sites for this trip were both hosting children's summer day camps. Each camp had 3 days and/or nights of

meetings. In addition, to commence & end the 8-day trip, a Sunday a.m. “whole-church-family” [my specialty, i.e., this is the primary event our Lord impressed me to focus upon two decades ago when He called us to this live-by-faith itinerant ministry] service was scheduled at each of the two host churches. Kim & I both felt the most advantageous “base camp” to conduct ministry from would be at neither ministry site, but at Tel Hai Camp, which was conveniently equidistant from each of the two churches involved. Yes, this did result in exponentially more miles of commuting to the ministry sites each day. But, given Tel Hai Camp for the first time in its **70-year history & my 30-year history** of serving there was “empty”, it was the perfect “base of tranquility” for me. The commutes also afforded me quiet “mindset prep time” & also “decompressing” from ministry after each event. [Yes, it was both sad & eerie not to have campers at camp in the prime of the summer!].

“KIM-MY MISSION CONTROL”



Speaking of “Tranquility Base”, etc., which is what **Neil Armstrong** called his landing spot on the moon when his **Apollo 11** mission landed there, Kim & I watched on YouTube last night “**The Greatest Adventure-Man’s Journey To The Moon**”. This 1979 documentary I have had on VHS tape for decades & have always loved watching it. In these space missions, virtually all of the public focus is on the rocket & the astronauts, & understandably so. And yet, said Saturn 5 & astronauts would not get off the ground without N.A.S.A.’s base support. Orson Welles, who narrated the documentary, said the U.S. hired 400,000 employees to initiate our country’s space race. **Kim Lorraine Guertin**=400,000 N.A.S.A. employees to me! She “fuels my rocket boosters” before “launch” with much prayer, encouragement, correction [yes-I often need it! Imagine that!], supplies-anything from clothes, to vitamins, to food, clerical, musical, etc. **Caboose! Ministries** would not only not get off the launching pad without her-it would not even get TO the launching pad! While I’m “out in space” on a ministry trip, she is covering our home-

base & keeps constant vigil & communications with me. Once, while doing a men's retreat, I left a very important Time Machine drama prop & object lesson at home. She met me halfway to retrieve it!

"LET'S LIGHT THIS CANDLE!"



Speaking of Mission Control at N.A.S.A., when they were on the precipice of launching the 1st American in space, a.k.a., **Alan Shepard**, they were very concerned for his safety as they were experiencing some technical difficulties. After deliberating for 4 hours whether to do so or not, Shepard, who was sitting all of that time in the capsule on top of the **Gemini** rocket overheard their conversation, said, "Listen, I'm cooler than you are. Why don't you fix your little systems & light this candle!". They did. And the rest was history. There comes a time in me with the countless details of preparation involved for ministry trips of this size & scope, that despite how many precautions are taken to be as prepared as possible for them & the fears & insecurities that always crop up around them, that my spirit just cries out, "Let's light this candle!". And, like Alan Shepard with Mission Control & I with Kim & the Lord, cast myself into His hands & grace. Note: "Light this candle!" has been a **hsc** [Hopewell Summer Camps] tradition for many, many years. Before the evening chapel services, my fellow directors & I, along with the worship team, would assemble just out the side door of Hemlock Hall. With months of preparation past us, having prayed, I'd typically look at **Devin Blankenbiller**, our "4th son", & say, "Let's light this candle!". He knew what I was talking about. 😊

"THE HOPE OF THE NATIONS @ HOPE OF THE NATIONS"



The 1st of these two back-to-back church camp ministry sites was at *Hope of the Nations Church* [A *Hopewell Network* church] in downtown Reading, PA [btw-Kim & the family & I moved to DE 24 years ago from Reading]. Pastor *Angelo Sarna* & his “Honey”, whom I call “*Ste. Teresa*”, so awesomely care for their church family. *Aristotle* once said, “I am very much convinced that the fate of empires depends on the education of youth.” While Teresa may not have been familiar with this ancient quote, she surely knows the principle is true. Someone else once said, “If you lose a generation, you lose a nation.” We are very close to that tipping point in our country, if it hasn’t happened already! Hence, as I wrote extensively in the July newsletter, Teresa, by the burden of the Lord, knew she had to do something with the young this summer. “THE VALUE OF THE SOUL” Whenever I am asked to do a retreat, whether it’s a youth or men’s retreat, I almost always begin the retreat with this message, based on a sermon outline of *Charles Hodge’s The Princeton Sermons*, penned on *February 7, 1864*. Since my 1st of the eight meetings was a whole-church-family Sunday a.m. service at HOTN, I felt this message was super pertinent to lay the vision & groundwork for the 3 nights of camp there that would follow.

“NO DECENCY & ORDER? NO MINISTRY!” or “THERE’S A NEW SHERIFF IN TOWN”



The church was full of children that morning. That’s a good thing! No kids? Your church is dying or dead! They were fine during worship in song-some were even marching around the sanctuary waving flags. “However”, as we constantly say at camp, when said worship was over & the service’s other activities were being conducted, such as announcements, offering, guest ministers sharing testimonies, etc. there was a cluster of kids sitting on the floor in a circle in the back. They were talking & laughing as if they were in a schoolyard! They never stopped the entire time! They weren’t being mischievous or rebellious-just distracting & not respecting the venue [a church service] that they were presently in. As soon as the pastor handed the service over to me I corralled them to their parents &/or guardians who brought them. Bill Wilson, founder & director of the “[Yogi Bear Saturday-Sunday School](#)” in N.Y.C. for decades once said, “If you don’t put a program on for the kids-they’ll put one on for you!”. This is so very true. I had not spent all of this time in preparation & travel to have the kids take up the very limited time I had [relatively speaking in the day] to inculcate the Word of God into them & the other souls in the room. After I had the kids sit with their parents &/or guardians I told them, “Hey kids? This is my time now. If I was reading from a comic book it’d be OK to talk, chat, & laugh. But this is **the Word of God.**”

“GRIPPED BY THE HAND WITH THE HOLE IN IT”



Once again, as He has so many times before, the Lord by His Spirit's presence gripped these kids & had them riveted on me as I preached re: the value of their eternal souls- for almost an hour! Yes-the same kids who moments before were in their "schoolyard"! I've prayed so many times re: this, "Lord? If You give them to me [the kids in the audience], I'll give them back to You." And He did. Jesus. He did. The following 3 evenings of the church camp were all a gift from God. How so? Our Lord, despite the service being held in a church & not at Tel Hai, gave me "camp services" each & every night. What is a "camp service"? The Spirit of the Lord is very evident in the place. His presence is heavy, sweet, & thick. Remember, "glory" in Hebrew literally means "heavy". You don't want to nor know how to end the service. In such times, much to the chagrin of my hosts, when I am done with my part of feeding & leading, I hand it over to the church leader to conclude the service & dismiss the audience. No host relishes this task. A former pastor/boss of mine, a.k.a., Dave Appleby once said of me, "Michael doesn't know how to end a service." He's right! 😊 And, to be honest, I still don't!

"U-HAUL? NO. ME-HAUL!"



Because I had so much ministry equipment, & had another church camp commencing the evening after HOTN's was over, I knew I could not pack & load up after the last evening's service at HOTN. Hence, after the 2nd & 3rd evenings' services, with the help of some faithful brothers [& children!], I took a load down to Good Shepherd Community Church [another Hopewell Network Church] in **Reamstown, PA**, which was about 25 minutes away. Though this greatly extended my day [I'm not a night person! My usual bedtime is 8:30 p.m.! But-not during camp season!] & I was exhausted by the end of the meetings, I knew this was a ministry-logistic necessity! I would get back to Tel Hai after 11 p.m. & to bed around midnight.

“THE MUSSERS MUSTER THE TROOPS”



The hosts for the next camp were *Dwayne & Kendra Musser*-dear friends for many years. All 4 of their children were campers with me & Kendra has ministered to the children for me at hsc kids camp numerous times. Kendra’s father, a.k.a. Carl Stoltzfus supplied the horses I needed for my annual hsc “Director’s Field Drama” for many years, with his wife Hilda’s faithful assistance. Both Carl & Hilda would be in my dramas as well. You can view many of them on my YouTube channel, vis, “Michael Robert Guertin”. [btw-Carl made a years’-long dream come true for me years ago-he provided me more than once with a custom-made chariot! And Carl was the driver! 😊]



True-to-form, one evening, when I arrived late to **GSCC** to drop off another load of ministry equipment, after having had ministered at HOTN, there were Dwayne & Kendra sitting out in the

parking lot of the church, so kindly & patiently waiting for me! They both had had very long days & were spearheading the camp, not to mention helping their pastor care for the church family- & here they were-ready to help me unload! Like themselves, their camp was so very well organized despite the late hour of deciding to put it on in the light of so many **Covid-19** “uncertainties”. These “uncertainties” were actually MY blessing! How so? Kendra would typically put together the lessons herself, but given the relative lateness of the hour re: deciding whether to have the camp or not, it would’ve just overwhelmed her to have to do this responsibility as well.



Hence, she called “the **Caboose! hotline**”! 😊 As with HOTN’s camp, there were many young children at this camp as well. The Sower, The Gospel Elaborated, & The Holy Spirit: His Person & Work were in order for this camp. I had hoped to be able to cap the week off by ministering to the whole church family as I had done at HOTN but the preaching schedule was already in place for that Sunday. In the light of that I had asked Devin Blankenbiller, mentioned above, pastor of Abundant Life AG church in nearby Birdsboro, if he could use my services since I was in the area anyway. He gladly obliged. I was to preach at his two Sunday a.m. services. “However”, the preaching team for GSCC suddenly fell through. To be honest, this was a prayer & dream-come-true for me. As much as I have been waiting & longing to preach at Dev’s church again, I truly felt it was so very important to minister to the parents of the campers who had sat under me the 3 days prior. Devin graciously released me from my duties at his church with the plan to reschedule me there in the Fall. While at HOTN I preceded the camp with The Value of the Soul. At GSCC I ended with this message to show the parents why we had the camp for their young. If you care to watch: https://youtu.be/S5LLoM_OUys Once again, our gracious Lord came to us with His sweet presence. I am sick to my stomach with just the thought of this not happening when I stand before His people. “8 in 8!” This was especially miraculous given I preached **8X in 8**

days! In **34+ years** of ministry, I had never done this. The most ever prior to this past week was 5X in as many days. And this “**8 in 8**” as stated above also encompassed driving **557 miles** overall to do it. When I’d get back to my cabin at night I’d grab something to eat I had brought, shower, & crash. It would take me much of the following day just to recuperate from the day before. “Feeling” so very unprepared due to my fatigue, I would often just “fall” upon the Lord for His gracious enabling & infilling. And like **Gideon** of old who was so characterized by fears & insecurities, our Lord would “clothe me” with **His Spirit** once again for the task at hand. Praise His Name.

“WHAT I WANT TO BE”



On the 1st day of the **Battle of Gettysburg**, July 1, 1863, the Union Cavalry commanded by Gen. John Buford was greatly outnumbered by the Confederate forces. He was trying to hold on with the limited resources he had. He was holding out for reinforcements to arrive in the person of **Gen. John Reynolds**. When Reynolds finally did arrive, Buford thanked God. It helped save the day. Often through the years it has been my deepest desire to be that to my fellow ministers who are on the daily frontlines of head-pastorate ministry. I felt the same for these 3 camps this summer. Here is a link to that 2-minute scene from Gettysburg [1993] that has so often inspired me & very accurately depicts my heart to be a “reinforcement” in the Lord. May it always be so. <https://youtu.be/ATmIfWGLAY>

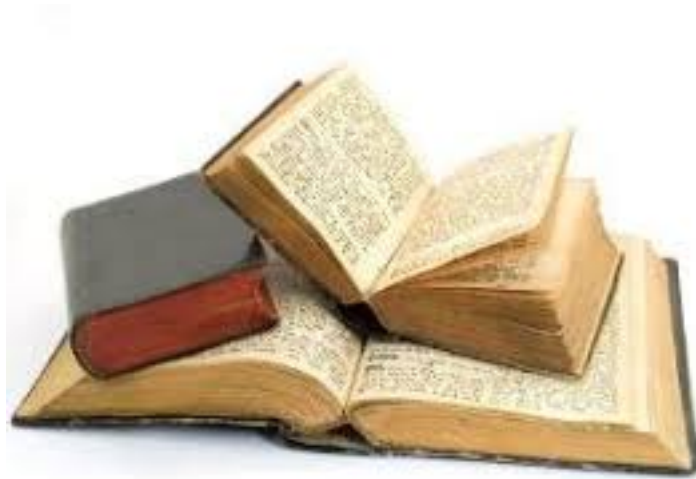
I wanted to write this newsletter as soon as I was able, as a week from tomorrow I head out again for another 2-week day camp in downtown Reading. This event is sponsored by **City Light Ministries** headed by “**St. Joe**” **Sclafani**, a very dear friend & brother in the Lord. It will be held at his ministry center, a.k.a., “**The Fortress**”. This newsletter would be due out 3 days after arriving home from that ministry trip. I always return from such ministry trips hitting the ground running with numerous & various post-trip tasks to perform via “post-ministry adrenaline”, followed by a deep fatigue crash. I knew it was best to write it now. I trust to give a thorough report of the camp at The Fortress next month.

Thank you so very much for reading, & should our Lord so prompt you, to pray for Kim & me. If He should move upon to share an offering to help us to continue the Lord’s work among the young & not-so-young, you may do so below.

Sincerely & gratefully,

Michael & Kim

PS-Don't forget to catch my weekly "TabTalks" on either my **YouTube** channel or Facebook pages. These are verse-by-verse expositions of Scripture. I have been in Hebrews chapter 1 since mid-April. Also, for old & young alike, since mid-April, I've also produced "**Chip's Sunday Shows**" which both old & young alike enjoy. 😊 If you're not on Facebook nor subscribed to YouTube, I can email you these programs. I do so every week for a group of people in said category.



***Caboose! Commentary Corner:** [Our daughter **Laura** once said she'd love to have my old Bibles when I passed for all of the notes I have written in them over the decades. This was quite humbling to say the least, especially coming from one of your own children. Hence, I've decided to post each month random notes/comments from Bibles I have studied from: "The longer you adore [via God's Word & presence] the stronger you abhor [idols, substitutes, God-glory 'robbers', etc.] [MRG-from "Josiah/High Places" sermon]



Caboose! On the Loose:

****Lookin' out for the little guys...***

Ministry/Events for SEPTEMBER & those not listed in last month's newsletter:

Sept. 2,9,16,23,30: TabTalk video productions: verse-by-verse expository teachings

Sept. 6,13,20,27: "Chip" Sunday Show video productions: for kids & big kids!

Sept. 4-6: Abundant Life Church, Georgetown, DE: Sat. family service; Sun. a.m. service

Sept. 12: Hopewell Community Church, Pottstown, PA: Rodriguez/Chiu wedding [camp counselors]



*Michael is an ordained [Elim Fellowship](#) itinerant Stateside missionary & is also licensed to preach the gospel by the local church he attends, Immanuel Church. Caboose! is also an affiliate ministry of [The Hopewell Network of Churches](#). For 14 years he served on various local church staffs as their children's pastor. Since 2000 Kim & he have [lived by faith, having no set salary, retirement, etc. to speak of](#). Yet-this is their calling at this season of their lives. Michael preaches God's Word & systematic theology, using both drama & visual aids, to all age groups, from children to senior citizens, either separately or combined. To help support this work [any amount no matter how small is greatly appreciated!], please make all tax-deductible gifts payable to: [Elim Fellowship](#), c/o 1703 Dalton Rd., Lima, NY 14485, marking it "[Preferred-Michael Robert Guertin](#)" or you may click on the link below to give directly. Any gift no matter how small would be greatly appreciated! Thank you! [click here](#)

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